

S/N 09/842,573

PATENTRemarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-6, 9 and 10 remain pending. Claims 7, 8 and 11-18 have been canceled without prejudice. The revisions to claim 1 are supported, for example, at Fig. 2.

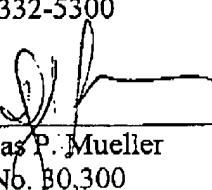
Claims 1-6, 8-14 and 16-18 have been rejected as anticipated by Shimakawa. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In Shimakawa, plural cells of a battery module are housed in individual containers, with each of the containers having a safety valve. In contrast, claim 1 requires that a battery module house a plurality of cells in a single container with a single safety valve. Therefore, independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Shimakawa. The configuration of claim 1 provides the advantage of reducing the amount of electrolyte released from the cells through the safety valve, thereby permitting the cells to retain sufficient electrolyte to maintain the desired battery characteristics. Shimakawa in no way suggests that such advantages could be achieved.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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DPM/gmr

